Proposed next steps for the implementation of the AEGIS Quality System (AQUAS)

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Eighth Meeting of the Working Group on *Prunus*
7-9 September 2010, Forli', Italy

Establishing the AEGIS Quality System (AQUAS)

Introductory note:

- Steering Committee agreed with approach (see Quality System for AEGIS discussion paper on AEGIS Web site)
- Paper also includes agreed principles, operational framework, technical elements, capacity building and oversight mechanism

AQUAS - Principles

Quality system to be based on the principles:

1. Quality assurance
   - **Plan**: Say what you do
   - **Do**: Do what you say
   - **Check**: Let an independent body check that you do what you say
   - **Act**: Correct and improve what you say you do
2. Decisions by consensus
3. Agreed minimum standards – involve partners; get "buy-in"
4. Capacity building plays a key role
5. Avoid unnecessary bureaucracy (pragmatic; not doctrinaire)
6. Effective guidance and advisory approach as monitoring

Technical elements

Elements to be established:

1. **Operational genebank manual** – all AEGIS Associate Members; based on genebank **template** (advanced draft available, version 8)
2. **Generic operational standards –** Secretariat (based on manuals and suggestions by WGs; cooperation with FAO)
3. Agreed **minimum crop specific technical standards –** all WGs (complementing generic standards)
4. **Quality management system procedures** – Secretariat; all WGs; Associate Members:
   a. **record keeping**
   b. **reporting**
   c. **monitoring (not policing, but guiding and advisory approach)**

Capacity building and oversight

Capacity building:

1. If standards are not met -> capacity building (in agreement and possible support from National Coordinator)
2. In case funds are not available locally, or through projects ->AEGIS Advisory Committee to assist
3. Where applicable, training courses and/or on-the-job training to be organized at Network or Programme level

Oversight:

1. First level monitoring of implementation of AQUAS by WGs
2. Second level monitoring across WGs by AEGIS AC
3. AEGIS AC to oversee implementation of AQUAS

Operational framework - 1

Partners and their major roles/outputs:

1. ECPGR Secretariat:
    1. Prepare draft template for genebank manual
    2. Draft generic operational standards
2. Working Groups or NCGs:
    1. Draft minimum standards by crop
    2. Organize reporting system
    3. Organize/implement the monitoring system

Operational framework - 2

3. AEGIS Advisory Committee

1. Comment on draft generic standards
2. Approve template
3. Comment on minimum standards (ensure “equal treatment” between crops)

4. ECPGR Steering Committee:

1. Approve generic and technical standards
2. Approve reports
3. Decide on issues / capacity building recommendations

Operational framework - 3

5. Associate Members:

1. Adopt standards,
2. prepare genebank manual,
3. keep records,
4. write reports, and
5. adopt monitoring system

AQUAS – where are we?

- Discussion paper endorsed by SC; on the AEGIS website
- Ample discussions (at least for some crops)
- Agreed timeframe and process as well as responsibilities for its development
- Further "fine tuning" in EUROGENEBANK Project was planned; now to be done without additional support

- "New item" (part of EUROGENEBANK Project preparation): need for some sort of certification (of an accession or collection; a genebank; a genebank operation?)
  (ISO, AEGIS or what kind of certification?)
- A pre-condition to allow rationalization of collections to take place!?

The way forward - WGs

1. Testing the final template fro a genebank manual: any *Prunus* specific genebank interested to test it out and prepare genebank manual (September)?
2. Comment on generic technical standards (autumn 2010)
3. Initiation of process to develop crop specific technical minimum standards (from September onwards):
   a. **Collecting / Acquisition**
   b. **Regeneration / Propagation**
   c. **Drying and other preparatory steps**
   d. **Storage/field genebank maintenance**
   e. **Seed quality and viability monitoring**
   f. **Dispatch and disposal**
   g. **Characterization**

European Cooperative Programme for Plant Genetic Resources

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Thank you for your attention!

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